

BFV interviews with Karl BRETT and
Edwin von EULENBURG in August-September 1965

Translation of BFT Report

On 25 August 1965 Karl BRETT was queried regarding HEINE. He made the following statement:

"HEINE is the son of a piano manufacturer from Tartu, Estonia. He is, in my opinion, of German origin. We attended the same private gymnasium in Tartu but we were not members of the same class because he is several years older than I. The gymnasium awarded the abitur upon completion of the course of study.

HEINE belonged to an Estonian youth organization similar to the Boy Scouts. I don't remember the name of this organization any longer. If I remember correctly it sounds like "Junge Adler" (Young Eagles) or something similar. The organization was not political.

In 1940 or 1941 HEINE was involved in a fight with other youths in Tartu. As far as I can remember the occasion was the raising of a Soviet flag. As I later learned from eye witnesses, HEINE was arrested by the Russians because he belonged to a group which was against raising the flag. During our period of confinement in a prisoner of war camp in the Soviet Union, HEINE once told me that because of that event he was arrested and interrogated by the Russians. Probably during this period of incarceration his parents were repatriated to Germany. Not until after his release in 1941 did HEINE repatriate. I don't know to which place in Germany HEINE's family moved.

With the repatriation of the Germans from Estonia, I also came to Germany in 1941. In the same year I volunteered for the German Army and was assigned to the 20th Grenadier Division. The members of this unit were mainly Germans who formerly lived in Estonia. In September 1944 I became a Russian prisoner-of-war.

Perhaps in the fall of 1952 I met HEINE in a prisoner of war camp near Kama. He told me at this time that during the war he was a member of the Estonian division of the German Army. Allegedly he attended a military school in sad Tbilz and obtained

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an officer's rank, possibly Untersturmführer. In 1944 he was assigned to the fighting sector around Tartu where he was wounded and captured unconscious by the Russians. For this reason HEINE could not say when he was caught by the Russians. I do not know the kind of wound suffered by HEINE. According to further recounting of this period by HEINE, he came to the prisoner of war camp in Vorkuta in 1945/46 from which he escaped. He made his way to Estonia and took up illegal residence with the so called "Forest Brothers". I do not know whether he took part with these people in battles against the Russians. Likewise I do not know how long he remained free and whether he was able to escape once again after his recapture. In my opinion he was probably once again in a Russian prisoner-of-war camp in 1950/51.

Question:

Do you know anything about HEINE's sentencing in the USSR?

Answer:

Nothing specific. I can only assume (based on my accumulative experience) that, because of his former attitude toward the Russians in Estonia, the flag incident in Tartu, his service in the German Army and participation in battle, as well as his flight from the prisoner of war camp, and his subsequent illegal residence in Estonia, he was sentenced to 10-15 years in a forced labor camp. In any case the sentence was probably based on political grounds. I have never spoken with HEINE about his sentence or the grounds on which it was based. Also I have learned nothing about HEINE's sentence from other former comrades.

Question:

As it may be known to you, were the prisoners in the prisoner of war camp who performed certain tasks treated in a favorable manner? How much of this is applicable to HEINE?

Answer:

I know what the purpose of this question is. One must say that each person who found himself in

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a prisoner of war camp in Russia had something to do with the NKVD. It is also known to me that prisoners could receive special consideration or earn early release through informant activity in the camp or by agreeing to carry on informant activities after their release. I do not believe that HEINE belonged to this group of comrades. According to my view he was at that time so physically unstable that he was unable to participate in such activities. During our acquaintance he behaved himself above reproach and, as far as it was possible, helped other comrades. At one time he accepted an assignment for me when I was in the hospital so that I could remain there a few more days. In the camp he was at no time suspected of informant activities by any of the other prisoners. I positively do not know whether HEINE obligated himself to perform any activity after his release from the prisoner of war camp. I do not believe this about him.

In summer of 1955 I was released from imprisonment in the USSR. Since then I have not seen HEINE. Whether after my release he remained in the Kama forest camp or possibly was transferred to another camp, I do not know; however, this is possible.

SCHIDLOVSKI emigrated on 6 January 1958 from Berlin to Southwest Africa.

Edwin von EULENBURG had only a hazy recollection of HEINE. The acquaintance, which was made in the usual way in a prisoner of war camp, was not continued. In July 1964 Von EULENBURG received a letter dated 11 July 1964 from a former Estonian soldier, Heino TUISK, Pasadena, Maryland, Route #10, Box 81-D, with the following content:

"My name is Heino TUISK and I am an Estonian, who, since 1951 has been living here in the U.S.A. One of my acquaintances is Mr. HEINE, who you must surely know from your time in a Russian prisoner of war camp in Siberia from 1951 to 1956. I am myself a former Estonian soldier who fought against Bolshevism in the last war. I am very proud that I recognized already in 1941 that Bolshevism is

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the greatest enemy of freedom. Still today it is clear that the Communist devils really threaten the entire world. As I believe, so do almost all former Estonian soldiers who were in the war. Until now we could not do very much about it. As citizens of a small country such as Estonia we are, however, in the position to prove that STALIN and KHRUSHCHEV are worse than HITLER ever was. We have sufficient experience from both (to enable us to do this). Only by telling this to the Americans can the true facts be protected.

So with such an anti-Communist interpretation, Lt. Erik HEINE presented a film in Canada. The film concerns the activity of Estonian partisans and how brutal and inhuman the Communists actually are. Also it shows why the people from the small country of Estonia rather die fighting than live in slavery. Mr. HEINE showed this film with great success in Canada and the United States, until unexpectedly a former group of so-called Estonian liberals spread the rumor: Lt. HEINE is a known Russian KGB agent. Of course most of the Estonians do not believe this; this is no doubt a very common accusation. For this reason I would like to ask you to write me the truth. Then you could certify that Mr. HEINE is not a Communist. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for your trouble."

Edwin von EULENBURG replied that he could give no information about HEINE's attitude in the prisoner of war camp. He is only in a position to certify that at that time HEINE did not appear to him to be a Communist, but rather appeared to be a freedom fighter.